



13 June 2007

## Independence Day Safety Message

1. On July 4th we will celebrate the 231<sup>st</sup> anniversary of our nation's independence. In addition, our Servicemembers will have a long weekend 6 – 8 July. As we prepare to celebrate this occasion and enjoy the holiday festivities, it is especially fitting that we honor those who defend the freedoms on which our country is based. Honoring our Servicemembers includes ensuring that all of them represent our nation as great ambassadors, while together we celebrate our nation's birth. I expect first line supervisors to conduct one on one "Under the Oak Tree Counseling (UtOTC)" with each of their subordinates. This approach is described in [Command Policy Letter #2, Command Safety](#). Also, I encourage leaders at all levels to view a [video](#) the Army Combat Readiness (Safety) Center put together in an interview with me. The video conveys my personal thoughts regarding UtOTC. Leadership involvement, at all levels, makes a difference. Additionally, view my [video](#) regarding summer safety concerns.
2. I expect first-line leaders to be aware of their subordinates' plans and use UtOTC to gain a personal contract with subordinates on ways to keep weekend activities safe, including eliminating alcohol abuse, enforcing the Buddy System, and adhering to our established curfew. Also, inform personnel that the use of pyrotechnics/fireworks, including firecrackers, is prohibited except for officially controlled and sanctioned displays.
3. The chain of command is responsible to ensure UtOTC is being executed to standard. A majority of our serious incidents, significant indiscipline and destructive behavior involves alcohol abuse. Prevention of alcohol abuse over the holiday is a command responsibility. All of us must do our duty -- get involved in the lives of your subordinates and peers and make a difference. Engaged leadership, self-discipline, and UtOTC can ensure that tragedy will not mar the joy of this holiday period.
4. Everyone should review the [USFK 2007 Summer Safety Campaign](#) on how to be safe during the holidays. In addition, [Command Policy Letter #6, Buddy System](#) and [Command Policy Letter #7, General Order Regarding Off Installation Curfew](#) provide command guidance on ways to stay safe. We must be relentless in pursuing our goal of "No Loss of Life at any time", while preventing major acts of Servicemember indiscipline.
5. Commanders and Leaders are responsible to ensure this Fourth of July weekend is incident free across their commands and organizations. We are accountable. Leader commitment and attention ensured no Servicemembers were lost and no serious incidents occurred over the long Memorial Day weekend. Thank you. Let "No Loss of Life" and no serious acts of indiscipline be our end state for this upcoming holiday. We are Ambassadors for America. Have a safe and enjoyable Fourth of July and stay safe throughout the entire summer season.

B. B. BELL  
General, US Army  
Commander

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